



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/646,924	09/25/2000	Eric Raspe	MERCK 2157	2859
23599	7590	01/27/2004	EXAMINER	
MILLEN, WHITE, ZELANO & BRANIGAN, P.C. 2200 CLARENDON BLVD. SUITE 1400 ARLINGTON, VA 22201			CHUNDURU, SURYAPRABHA	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1637	
DATE MAILED: 01/27/2004				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/646,924	RASPE ET AL.	
	Examiner Suryaprabha Chunduru	Art Unit 1637	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 September 2003.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1,3-12 and 14-22 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) Claim(s) 1,3-12 and 14-22 is/are rejected.
7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. Acknowledgement is made for the request to establish continued prosecution application (RCE) filed on September 22, 2003. The request for RCE is accepted and is established with the status of the application as follows:
 - a. the filling date of this RCE is established as 9/25, 2000;
 - b. Claims 1, 3-12, 14-22 are pending.
2. The Amendment filed on September 22, 2003 has been entered and considered.

Response to arguments

3. The following is the rejection maintained in the previous office action under 35 USC 112, first paragraph:

Claims 1-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

The current claims are drawn to a method for identifying a compound useful for the treatment of lipid metabolism dysfunction which comprises a ROR receptor and its functional equivalents thereof. This large genus of functional equivalents of ROR receptor is represented in the specification by the broad term 'functional equivalents'. Thus, applicant has express possession of only one species, the ROR receptor itself, in a genus, which comprises hundreds of millions of different possibilities (such as ROR receptor equivalent having binding sites for compounds with antiarthritic and auto-immune activity). The written description guidelines note regarding such genus/species situations that "Satisfactory disclosure of a ``representative number" depends on whether one of skill in the art would recognize that the applicant was in

possession of the necessary common attributes or features of the elements possessed by the members of the genus in view of the species disclosed." (See: Federal Register: December 21, 1999 (Volume 64, Number 244), revised guidelines for written description.) Here, no common elements or attributes of the ROR receptor functional equivalents are disclosed in the specification, which could give a clear definition of the functional equivalents. Further no information is given regarding a methodology to determine such common elements or attributes.

It is noted that in Fiers v. Sugano (25 USPQ2d, 1601), the Fed. Cir. concluded that "...if inventor is unable to envision detailed chemical structure of DNA sequence coding for specific protein, as well as method of obtaining it, then conception is not achieved until reduction to practice has occurred, that is, until after gene has been isolated...conception of any chemical substance, requires definition of that substance other than by its functional utility."

In the instant application, the broadly claimed tub gene is not defined clearly. Also, in Vas-Cath Inc. v. Mahurkar (19 USPQ2d 1111, CAFC 1991), it was concluded that:

"...applicant must also convey, with reasonable clarity to those skilled in art, that applicant, as of filing date sought, was in possession of invention, with invention being, for purposes of "written description" inquiry, whatever is presently claimed."

Response to arguments:

With regard to the rejection in the previous office action under 35 USC 112 first paragraph, Applicants' amendment and response have been fully considered and found persuasive in part. Applicants amended the independent claims to recite a location of response element of ROR in the apo C-III promoter region (position -198 to +24). The amendment is fully considered and found persuasive regarding the narrow limitation. However, the structural limitation (specific sequence identity), that is, the specific binding site or where in the specified location the biological function is situated that promotes the transcription of apo C-III gene, is not described. Further specification teaches overlapping fragments for example on page 15 of the instant specification, positions -108/+24, and -62/+24 of the apo C-III promoter. Thus the structural

limitation is not described for the response element of ROR in the location of -198 to +24 of the apo C-III promoter. Therefore, the rejection is maintained herein for claims 1, 3-12, 14-22, herein.

New Grounds of rejection

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

4. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1, 3-12, 14-22 recite the limitation "the" in response element of ROR. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. The specification lacks support because specification lacks support for the single response element in that specified region of apo C-III promoter since specification has support for other overlapping fragments positions - 108/+24, and -62/+24 of the apo C-III promoter, which potentially comprise response elements of ROR. Amendment to replace "the" with "a" would obviate the rejection.

Conclusion

Claims are free of prior art.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Suryaprabha Chunduru whose telephone number is 703-305-1004 (new telephone number is 571-272-0738, effective from January 9, 2004). The examiner can normally be reached on 8.30A.M. - 4.30P.M, Mon - Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gary Benzion can be reached on 703-305-1119. The fax phone numbers for the

organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9306 for regular communications and - for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0196.


Suryaprabha Chunduru
December 2, 2003


JEFFREY FREDMAN
PRIMARY EXAMINER